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Letter dated 7 December 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Burkina Faso to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

On orders from my Government, I have the honour to transmit herewith a press statement on the sixth meeting of the Permanent Consultative Framework of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement, held on 3 December 2009 under the auspices of the Facilitator of the inter-Ivorian direct dialogue, His Excellency Mr. Blaise Compaoré, President of Burkina Faso (see annex).

I would be grateful if this letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Michel **Kafando**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 7 December 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Burkina Faso to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Inter-Ivorian direct dialogue

Sixth meeting of the Permanent Consultative Framework

Press statement

1. At the invitation of His Excellency Mr. Blaise Compaoré, President of Burkina Faso, Facilitator of the inter-Ivorian direct dialogue, the sixth meeting of the Permanent Consultative Framework of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement was held in Ouagadougou on Thursday, 3 December 2009.

2. In addition to the Facilitator, the meeting was attended by the following, all members of the Framework:

- His Excellency Mr. Laurent Gbagbo, President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire;
- Mr. Guillaume Kigbafori Soro, Prime Minister of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire;
- Mr. Henri Konan Bédié, President of the Parti démocratique de Côte d'Ivoire-Rassemblement démocratique africain (PDCI-RDA); and
- Mr. Alassane Dramane Ouattara, President of the Rassemblement des républicains (RDR).

3. In his introductory remarks, the Facilitator thanked the members of the Framework for attending the sixth meeting. He congratulated them on the significant progress achieved in implementation of the various crisis recovery programmes. He stressed the importance of the meeting, which would allow the members of the Framework to evaluate the electoral process in light of the information provided by the Independent Electoral Commission (CEI); that that evaluation would make it possible to identify the remaining tasks to be completed in order to get a better idea of what the new date for the presidential election should be. The meeting would also give the participants an opportunity to review together the implementation of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement and the supplementary agreements thereto. In that connection, he explained that the Ivorian people and the international community had high expectations of that meeting of the Framework. The Facilitator thanked His Excellency Mr. Laurent Gbagbo, President of the Republic, and Mr. Guillaume Kigbafori Soro, Prime Minister, for their sustained commitment to implementation of the Ouadagougou Political Agreement despite the technical and financial problems encountered throughout the process. He also thanked the PDCI-RDA and RDR Chairmen for their ongoing support, which had made it possible to achieve significant results. He expressed his appreciation for the expert bodies that had laid the foundation for the progress achieved in the electoral process, particularly the CEI, the National Statistical Institute (INS), the National Identification Office (ONI), the National Commission for the Supervision of Identification (CNSI) and SAGEM, as well as civil society and the Ivorian religious communities, whose support had been crucial to peacebuilding. As the progress

made since the March 2007 signing of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement marked an important phase of Côte d'Ivoire's political history, the Facilitator called on all stakeholders to take action and to work harder in synergy to complete the final procedures for holding the first round of the presidential elections as soon as possible. In conclusion, he expressed the hope that they would meet again very soon, after the presidential election, for an update on the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire.

4. Following the adoption of the agenda, Mr. Robert Beugré Mambé, Chairman of the CEI, briefed the members of the Framework on developments in the electoral process, including preparation of the provisional electoral list of 6,384,253 voters. It emerged from this briefing that when the voter registration data had been processed by computer and cross-checked against past records, 5,300,586 voter registrations had been confirmed and 1,083,667 applicants had been requested to clarify their status. Those individuals were currently waiting for their cases to be resolved under the ongoing complaint procedure. In addition, the CEI Chairman had been focusing on the next stages of the electoral timetable in the lead-up to the presidential election.

5. Prime Minister Guillaume Soro introduced a report evaluating implementation of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement and the fourth supplementary agreement thereto.

6. Having heard the information contained in these presentations, the members of the Framework welcomed the significant progress made by the identification and voter registration exercise, the Constitutional Council's confirmation of the 14 candidates for the presidential election, the issuance and posting of the provisional electoral list and the opening of a 38-day period for lodging complaints.

7. In order for this highly sensitive stage of the electoral process to be properly conducted, the Framework members appealed to the Government, the CEI and the relevant expert bodies to take all appropriate measures to ensure transparency and respect for the prescribed procedures during the period in question.

8. The Framework noted that there had been delays in following the electoral timetable; that for technical and financial reasons, it had not been possible to hold the presidential election on 29 November 2009; and that important tasks (preparation of the electoral list and issuance of identity cards and voter registration cards) had yet to be carried out.

9. Consequently, the Framework members endorsed the following stages, recommended by the Chairman of the CEI:

- December 2009: Handling of complaints regarding the provisional electoral list;
- January 2010: Preparation and issuance of the final electoral list, the lists of persons authorized to vote at each polling station, voter registration cards and national identity cards;
- February 2010: Issuance of voter registration and national identity cards and electoral campaign;
- Late February-early March 2010: First round of the presidential election.

Taking these stages into account, the Framework invited the CEI to propose to the Government, as quickly as possible, a date for the first round of the presidential election.

10. In order not to delay the electoral process, the Framework recommended that in light of the reliability of the system, misspelled names should not prevent anyone in possession of a voter registration card from voting in the presidential election. It was, however, understood that steps should be taken to correct those documents within two weeks of the second round of the election. To that end, the Framework invited the CEI to publicize that decision widely in order to ensure that it was fully understood by the public.

11. The Framework members expressed concern regarding the security of the electoral process and again urged the Government, the Defence and Security Forces and the Forces armées des forces nouvelles (FAFN) to continue their efforts to ensure full implementation of the comprehensive election security plan while respecting the principles of joint representation and parity under the effective authority of the Integrated Command Centre (CCI), which should be provided with the necessary resources.

12. With respect to the role of the media in the electoral process, after a lengthy discussion, the Framework stressed the importance of equitable access to the media for political parties and candidates during the lead-up to the electoral campaign and of respect for those candidates' right to equal access to the media during the electoral campaign, and invited the Government and the CEI to ensure full respect for those principles.

13. The Framework encouraged the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Côte d'Ivoire to continue to fulfil his mandate to certify the electoral process in cooperation with all concerned parties, including the Office of the Facilitator, in accordance with Security Council resolution 1765 (2007).

14. While noting with satisfaction the signing by the President of the Republic, on 16 November 2009, of important decrees concerning reunification of the Army, the Framework encouraged the signatories to the Ouagadougou Political Agreement to settle the remaining military issues without delay in a climate of total calm, in accordance with the fourth supplementary agreement thereto.

15. With a view to peacebuilding and national reconciliation, the Framework called on all Ivorian parties to make a greater effort to respect the Codes of Good Conduct, particularly those of the political parties and the media. It urged them to ensure the free movement of persons and goods and to encourage the provision of assistance to war-displaced persons upon their return and their resettlement in their home regions.

16. The Framework commended the respective efforts of the Government of Côte d'Ivoire and the international community, which had made it possible to mobilize the financial resources necessary to implementation of the various activities of the crisis recovery process. The members of the Framework invited them to continue on that path and to make the final effort needed to finance the remaining process activities. To that end, they urged the Government to release to the CEI the remainder of the latter's 2009 budget by 15 December 2009 and to provide it with a generous advance on its 2010 budget by 15 January 2010.

17. At the end of their meeting, the members of the Framework again expressed their gratitude to His Excellency Mr. Blaise Compaoré, President of Burkina Faso, Facilitator of the direct inter-Ivorian dialogue, for all his ongoing efforts to find a successful resolution to the crisis in Côte d'Ivoire.

18. The Framework decided to hold its next meeting before the first round of the presidential election in Côte d'Ivoire.

Done at Ouagadougou, 3 December 2009